



Nutritrack Data Access and Publishing Guide

1.0 Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide a guide for applicants interested in utilising the Nutritrack data set(s). The document provides an overview of Nutritrack and how to apply for access.

1.1 About the Nutritrack dataset(s)

Since 2012 The National Institute for Health Innovation (NIHI) has been undertaking annual, systematic surveys of packaged food and beverage products in New Zealand supermarkets. NIHI is an Auckland UniServices Limited Business Unit based within The School of Population Health at The University of Auckland. Supermarket data are collected by trained fieldworkers in four stores in the Auckland region at the same time each year, enabling tracking of labelling, ingredients and nutrient composition of New Zealand packaged food and beverage products over time.

Data collection: Trained fieldworkers use a customised smartphone application (app) to take photographs and collect information directly from all foods and non-alcoholic beverages displaying a Nutrition Information Panel (NIP) in four supermarket stores (New World, 4Square, Countdown, and PAK'nSAVE) in Auckland between February and June each year. Distribution of packaged food in New Zealand is dominated by supermarkets, accounting for 75% of all purchases. Supermarkets in turn are led by the two major companies, Progressive Enterprises Ltd and FoodStuffs New Zealand Ltd, which own the four store brands from which Nutritrack data are collected.

Data entry: Data from photographs of product packages are entered into a secure, online database (NutriWeb) by trained staff. Products are categorised in a hierarchical structure into 17 food groups, 69 categories, and 207 subcategories using a standardised global system (see accompanying data access application form).

Quality procedures: Quality checks are undertaken on a random 15% sample of products where data entered in all product fields are compared with source photographs for accuracy. Reports are also run across all products to identify outlier values, ensure complete and correct NIP data, and to maximise consistency of the categorisation of products over time. Data accuracy across critical fields is monitored during and after data collection each year to maximise accuracy of data collection and entry. In 2021 the database had a 99.3% accuracy rate.

Number of products: The tables below list the number of products in Nutritrack since 2013 and the information available on each product. Note that data for 2020 are missing. This is because COVID-19 lockdowns prevented standard Nutritrack data collection procedures and the 2020 Nutritrack dataset is not directly comparable with previous years.

Number of products

The tables below list the number of products in Nutritrack since 2013 and the information available on each product.

Year	Number of unique products*
2013	13,395
2014	14,416
2015	14,429
2016	15,317
2017	14,909
2018	15,192
2019	14,976
2020	8,404**
2021	15,206
TOTAL	126,244

*Defined as the number of unique barcodes

**Data collection for 2020 was disrupted due to Covid-19 lockdowns

Field	Years available
Barcode	All
Brand	All
Product name	All
Pack size	All
Recommended serve size	All
All nutrient values on the NIP**	All
Ingredients	All
Gluten status	All
Heart Foundation Tick label	2013 to 2016***
Daily Intake Guide label	All
Health Star Rating (HSR) label	2015 onwards****

*** NIP; Mandatory and non-mandatory nutrient information

**** HSR value only in 2015, and HSR value + energy icon label for 2017 onwards

Summary of key database features

Features	Information
Stores visited	1x New World, 1x 4Square, 1x PAK'nSave, 1x Countdown in Auckland
Collection frequency	Annual in-store data collection undertaken February to May each year
Classification system	17 major food groups, 69 food categories, and 207 subcategories
Key exclusions	Products that do not display a NIP, unpackaged fresh foods, bulk buy items, alcohol, seasonal products (e.g. Easter eggs), dietary supplements (sports foods are collected but vitamins, minerals and similar products are excluded)
Linkage with sales data	Nutritrack data have been linked with household food purchases from the Nielsen Homescan market research panel
Estimated HSR value	HSR score has been estimated for some years in Nutritrack and can be provided on request

To monitor the impact of changes in labelling, ingredients, and nutrients in packaged foods, NIHI links Nutritrack data with information on annual household food purchases from the Nielsen Homescan® panel.

Data format: Nutritrack data are available as extracts from the NutriWeb database provided in Microsoft Excel format. Each row in the Nutritrack database corresponds to a unique barcode and unique packaged food, including different pack sizes of the same product, although data are provided in an aggregated format in most cases

Funding: Annual Nutritrack data collections are funded by the Health Research Council (HRC) of New Zealand as part of the Dietary Interventions: Evidence & Translation (DIET) Programme Grant (18/672).

2.0 Data Access

2.1 The Nutritrack Data Governance Group

The role of the Nutritrack Data Governance Group is to facilitate the provision of appropriate access to Nutritrack data by approved applicants. The dataset(s) cannot be used without the prior approval of the Governance group and adherence to the terms of a subsequent data release agreement.

2.2. Applying for access to Nutritrack

Applicants must complete a Nutritrack data access application form, **ensure it is signed by all required parties**, and a scanned copy emailed to enquiries@nihi.auckland.ac.nz. All questions regarding access to the dataset(s) should also be emailed to this address.

When the application is received it will go through the following process:

- 1 The application will be reviewed to check: the feasibility of the project, potential overlap with other projects*, and datasets required.
- 2 The Nutritrack Data Governance Group will formally review the application and make a final decision on the application, usually within one month of receipt.
- 3 Where applications are approved, the DIET Project Manager will facilitate the provision of the dataset(s) to the applicant subject to the execution of an appropriate Agreement with UniServices.

*Note that in order to prevent overlap, the title and timeframe of your project may be shared with other parties accessing Nutritrack data – this will only occur if there is an existing Nutritrack project like that described in your application.

Applicants must send the DIET Project Manager a progress report one month prior to the data release expiry date. The progress report will usually be a short, written report outlining progress to date and indicating whether there are any plans to apply for an extension to the access period to complete the project. The Nutritrack Governance group meets regularly as required.

2.3 Application intake dates and capacity

Applications may be submitted at any time; however, they will only be processed at four intake points throughout the year. Three applications will be processed per intake with a

maximum of six applications per semester. Applications will be processed on a first come basis and if there are more than six received for that semester they will be placed on hold until the next intake. There will be no applications processed after October for the remainder of the year.

The intake dates include:

- Semester one:
 - Mid-February
 - Mid-May
- Semester two:
 - Mid-July
 - Mid-October

NutriTrack Application Intakes



2.4 Data release agreement, data format and costs

Successful applicants will be required to sign a data release agreement which defines the scope of the proposed analyses and explains required data security measures. By signing the data release agreement, the applicant agrees to **destroy all working copies of the dataset(s) on completion of the research** (one copy may be kept for archive purposes – the archive copy must not be accessed by anyone who is not a signatory to the data release agreement and must not be used for any purposes outside of those outlined in the agreement). Please ensure you email enquiries@nihi.auckland.ac.nz to confirm the data has been destroyed. Data release agreements are drawn up by an Auckland UniServices Limited Contracts Manager.

Note that a fee may be charged to cover the administration costs of accessing the data, and access to raw Nutritrack data is not usually provided. Data may take a different format e.g., aggregated, to ensure data protection.

3.0 Publishing outcomes using Nutritrack data

Publishing refers to conference presentations, journal articles, thesis, dissertations, and external reports.

- Copies of all published data must be provided to the Nutritrack Data Governance Committee for review at least two weeks before the planned submission, presentation, or publication date.
- All relevant external sources of data and funding should be acknowledged.

- Co-supervision of all theses and dissertations by at least one Nutritrack Governance Group member is recommended.
- Final copies of all publications, including presentations, journal articles, thesis, dissertations, and external reports must be provided to the DIET Project Manager and saved in the Nutritrack document repository.
- As part of the reporting requirements any research outputs maybe be listed in the DIET programme annual report to the Health Research Council of New Zealand.